

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1869.

Subject: Paul and Demetrius.

# PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

## SERMONS

PREACHED BY

## HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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## PAUL AND DEMETRIUS.

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I propose to remark upon the history contained in the 19th chapter of the book of Acts, beginning with the 23d verse, and continuing to the end of the chapter.

This scene took place at Ephesus, in Asia. Paul, together with several of his companions, had centered there for no inconsiderable time. He had gone from place to place, returning, from time to time, and making that, as it were, the center of his field. And his labor in various cities had been eminent, as we learn from the testimony of his enemies, and the fruit of it had been very great—so much so as to produce a very important impression upon that part of the public who were discerning and forelooking.

"And the same time there arose no small stir about that way; for a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen."

Shrines were little images of the temple of Diana, together with the statue of the goddess Artemis, or Diana, as we are accustomed to call her. These were made and distributed among the worshippers. Every very pious man had one in his house. Of course, at Ephesus everybody was pious. This temple, which was between four and five hundred feet long, and some two or three hundred feet broad, surrounded by a colonnade of more than a hundred and thirty or a hundred and forty magnificent columns, stored with treasures of art, and very rich withal in gold and silver, was much resorted to—so much so that the city itself reaped a great harvest, and became very proud of their temple, and very proud of their goddess. And so piety flourished there.

He "called together" these craftsmen, "with the workmen of like occupation"—of affiliated trades—"and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."

Having uttered that one single sentence, and hit the nerve, he had nothing more to say on that subject. He did not need to say any more.

For now they were prepared to be both patriotic and pious! Once strike men's pocket fairly, and then show them that duty to their pocket requires that they should be pious, and there will be no end to their piety; or that they should be patriotic, and they will be furiously patriotic! And so Demetrius, who was a discerner of human nature, was in some regards very much to be respected. He was a shrewd man; and he called together all these craftsmen and fellow laborers, and said to them one salient thing—"Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." And then he went on:

"Moreover, ye see and hear that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away the people, saying that they be no Gods which are made with hands. So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at naught, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth."

Incidentally, he felt it a pity that the craft should suffer; but he could not endure that the temple should suffer.

There is nothing that attaches people so much to their religion as to have every body admiring it. A church that every body talks about seems, to those that belong to it, to be a most admirable church. And here was this temple, and this Diana, that all the world admired. The people that dwelt in the town where the world came, where they bought shrines and images of her, and where, tarrying, they spent their money—how must they have adored their most profitable goddess!

"And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath"—for piety is very apt to be full of wrath; it very easily gets angry—"and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! And the whole city was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius, and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre"—the great public forum; "and when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not, and certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre."

Paul would have gone in. He was as brave as a lion, and as faithful to his friends as fidelity itself.

"Some, therefore, cried one thing, and some another; for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together."

It is an exquisite picture of a mob—a set, probably, of several thousand people, all confusedly hustled together in this vast forum, bawling at the top of their voice, some one thing, and some another; and the greatest part of them not knowing what they were there for, except to help make the noise. And, after all, this is the way in which truth has been attacked mostly in this world. People have got mad at it; have bawled at it; and have had mobs, and riots, and all manner of physical, forceful proceedings against it. But of that hereafter.

"And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward." Alexander wished to explain matters to them. He "beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence." Well,

why did not they let him—these Greeks, these Ephesians; these men that had such a splendid temple, and such a profitable goddess, and that had come together to have a consultation as to what they should do? They had caught one of the men, and he wanted to make his statement to them, and beckoned to them to hold their peace, and be quiet while he should do it. What was the objection to hearing him?

Now comes the only sensible man that seems to have belonged to the crowd:

"When the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? Seeing, then, that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet and to do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen which are with him have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another."

If he had said this at the beginning of the turmoil, he might as well have talked to the wind. You never can do anything with an excited man, or an excited crowd, taking them on the rising tide; but if you can only get them to bawl for two hours, until they are tired, then there is some chance for you. The town-clerk knew it. And you see how after this crowd had expended their energies in howling, they were disposed to listen.

"If ye enquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly."

And then, having secured their good sense, he touches their fear a little:

"For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse."

They were, you know, Roman subjects, and the government was very jealous, particularly of great crowds of people, fearing they might have some political design masked under their apparent zeal. They had felt the sword and rod, and this appeal was very significant to them.

"When he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly."

So the foam passed off. And, yet the history stands here; and it is a history not without many points of profound interest to us.

Paul had been preaching Christ as against idols, it seems by the testimony of Demetrius. If Paul had preached moral truth as against heathenism, in any such general and philosophical manner that it did not touch men's practical affairs, he might have gone on preaching to this day, and nobody would ever have thought of opposing him.

Men have talked a great deal about the toleration of Rome, and the Roman government, and the toleration of ancient civilized nations, as compared with the intolerance of Christian nations and Christian times. Wherever, in ancient or modern times, men preach truths adverse to the current truths in such a way that they are kept, like the clouds, high

above men's heads, in the abstract region, they can preach them just as long as they please. Paul might have discussed the abstract questions of religion, of the structure of the moral government of God, and the various questions of idols and idolators, to the end of his life, and no Demetrius would have risen up. It was not until he so discussed them that the abstract became concrete; it was not until the truth that he preached found an application to men—to their occupations, to their morals, to their interests, and so to their prejudices—that his preaching became offensive.

This reconciles the statement that men love truth, and are willing to hear the truth, with the other statement, that men resist light, and will not have it. It is true that men do love truth, abstractly considered. There is a pleasure in seeing that a thing is true in a different way, or in a higher way, than a man is accustomed to see it. And on one side men do like the truth. But still, that feeling is not so strong in them as their interests are. When the truth fitted itself into their apprehension, they liked it; but when it is carried forward with such applications and such various inflictions that their lower nature rises up against their higher nature, and preponderates, then men become haters of the truth.

Again, all great truths do reach down, finally, to men's private and business life. There is no great moral truth which does not ramify and radicate itself, so that if it be faithfully preached, first or last it will find its way down to men's thoughts, and feelings, and conduct, and business, and politics, and every thing else. I will defy any man to preach any great salient moral truth thoroughly, and not touch the artist's business. No man can preach any great salient moral truth thoroughly, and not find himself meddling with questions which concern courts, merchants, statesmen, politicians. For all truth, carried out, runs into the practical.

When, therefore, it is said, These churches and ministers have no right to meddle with political questions, it is saying substantially this: that ministers may preach truths as long as they preach them so that they do not hit anywhere; as long as they preach them abstractly; but that when they have carried them out in such a way that they take hold of men's interests, and so begin to be practical, then they must stop, because they have no right to preach politics!

In no other land as much as in this does preaching so soon become political; for, as we profess to be Christians, we have a right to bring all public questions to the arbitrament of revealed truth. And, first or last, at one time or another, almost every question that belongs to religion, becomes a political question. It would not have given the slightest offence, in years gone by for a man to have preached monogamy—

that a man ought to have but one wife; that men ought to maintain the New Testament doctrine on this subject. A man might have thundered against polygamy, without exciting any opposition. But the time is coming, very likely, in which there will be two parties bidding for votes. Utah will be between them; and one party will wink at polygamy, while the other party will be strong for monogamy. And then according to this doctrine, no man will have a right to preach on that subject, because he has no right to preach politics.

There is no question, from the top to the bottom of society, that may not become, by the eddyings and shifting of public affairs, a political question. And it is held that men must not preach upon it. And if they do, some Demetrius, ordained or unordained, will rise up and say, "These men are unsettling the community, and also disturbing our interest, or our polity, as the case may be."

Paul had no conception of what he was doing. He was preaching Christ fearlessly, freely, to the understanding, to the conscience, to every one of the feelings of the human heart. He had no idea that there was such a man on the face of the earth as Demetrius. He did not dream that he was hurting anybody. And yet, you see what were the ramifications of moral truth, and how, as the result of Paul's preaching, there arose this Demetrius, and his craftsmen, and all the neighborhood. It bore testimony against them. Though Paul did not know it, every one of them had been hit by him. So subtle, so far beyond what he realized, was the outreach and power of the Gospel, that when Paul was preaching Christ with one thought and one purpose, he found that he was doing vastly more than he intended, reaching down to men that he never knew existed, and to occupations that he never had in his mind. And so long as the world stands, faithful preaching will not only do what the preacher aims to do, but a great deal more. It will do unconscious things. It will reach men that he never thought of, and interests that he never contemplated.

Truth may be handled with unnecessary offence; it may be rudely handled; it may be preached with intemperateness and disproportion; it may be preached without a wise regard to times and seasons. There is such a thing as skill and wisdom in keeping the passions of men down, while you appeal to their reason and their higher feelings. There is such a way of preaching that under favorable circumstances we can sometimes persuade men to hear the truth against their interests. But, on the whole, in dealing with communities of men, there is no way in which you can so preach the truth that it will destroy men's interests, and have them remain peaceable; and like it.

In the development of Gospel truth, society is obliged continually to change its interests. It is indispensable to growth, that the lower

forms of life should change to higher ones, and some occupations, therefore, should be modified. Things that are entirely reputable in one age, become entirely disreputable in another. Things that our fathers hardly thought of would now cast a man out of society. This belongs to the necessity of development and growth.

When you are preaching, not for any special work in any single man's soul, but so as to renovate the community, make sure of this, that you never can preach so as to be felt and have power in the community, without raising against you all those whose interests must suffer.

That was what our Master meant when he said, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." He knew (for he needed not that any man should testify to what was in man) that the strong man of the heart would not be bound or cast out of his own castle unless there was strength superior to his brought to bear upon him. He knew that men who lived by pampering superstitions, and lusts, and evil passions, would not consent to be purified without a struggle. Satan, either in man or in society, is neither to be bound or cast out, except there be a mighty power over against him.

You will therefore be prepared to say that this Demetrius was a very bad man. That is the general opinion. I do not think myself that he was a saint: but was he exceptionally bad? I do not know that he was worse than any ordinary man here: I doubt if there are not five hundred Demetruises in this congregation—that is to say, men who, under the same circumstances, would do just exactly what Demetrius did. We look upon him with all the light and refinement of our modern consciences; but that is not a fair judgment. We must go back and look at the way in which he was educated, and consider the plane on which he stood, and see how things looked to him, and then form our judgment of him. We must remember, in the first place, that he knew no religion but heathenism, and that he supposed that to be the best religion there was in the world. We must remember, too, that he occupied the same relation to his religion that the Tract Society does to the Christian religion. The Tract Society makes shrines—little books, little instructive treatises, representing their notions of religion. What was Demetrius doing? He made no books; but he was making little images of the temple, and little statues of Diana. And they were sent into everybody's house, in order that men might have their religion right by them. It is a convenient thing to have a pocket god; and he was helping people to have little portable deities of their own. And according to the doctrine of symbolism, I do not know why they had not a right to employ those things. Symbolic teachings, statues, garments, were employed by the most intelligent of the old heathen, to help their imagination. They did not worship the stone, the gold, nor

the silver. They said, "These are mere remembrances. We look at them, and see God." And our prayers serve very much the same purpose. They quicken our imagination, and help us to approach the real God.

Demetrius, a shrewd man, without doubt, probably said to himself, "It is better for the people to stick to their religion. And what if, making their shrines is profitable to me, I am working at a religious business; I am working for the good of mens' consciences, and for the furtherance of the faith. I am doing just the thing that a devout man ought to do. And as our religion is associated with our country, I am making men not only religious, but patriotic. And this wanderer, this vagabond Jew, himself, when he has discovered what we are so proud of, will believe in Ephesianism." He felt that he was doing right in fostering the spirit that prevailed among them. He felt that here was a man preaching against the settled religion of the people, and against the settled policy of the state, and offending the prejudices of the best portion of the community. He felt that here was a man destroying all the educated notions of the common people, and preparing them to break loose from their ideas of religion, and embrace blank infidelity. Here was a man that was a Jew, that was not born in Asia anyhow, that was born away off in Palestine, and was setting forth a strange God; and Demetrius felt everything in him rise up in indignation. And it is not difficult to say that though that was not the wisest and best course, it was not a very flagitious one, judging from ordinary specimens.

And consider that doubtless he had, in a certain sort, a sincere belief in Diana, his tutelary divinity; and that he could say, with some truth, "My conscience pledges me to do this." We know, from the narration, and the way it is given, that the mainspring of his conduct was interest. He said so, distinctly, to the craftsmen. "Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." Being a sagacious merchant, he probably looked over his accounts, and said, "I have not made as many shrines as usual. The demand for them is becoming less and less, because this Paul has been going about unsettling the faiths of men. If this goes on, I cannot tell what will become of my business." He looked at the matter as a sagacious manufacturer. And selfishness was stirred up in him, unquestionably. But I think he had a feeling of devoutness, according to his knowledge and condition.

And that brings up the question of mixed motives. Was it wrong for Demetrius to gain all this advantage through a selfish consideration? No. Was it wrong for him to mingle with his piety, such as it was, and with his patriotism, such as it was, personal regard? No, it was not wrong. If you were to take away from men all that religion which comes

from their personal interest in it; if you were to take away from them that love of country, that desire for good government, that patriotism, which springs from, or is based upon, selfish considerations, I am afraid there would be very little operative patriotism in the community. If you were to take away from men their attachment to their country as the place where they live, and where their children live, you would remove the greater part of that patriotism which animates the masses of the community. And yet, they may have some pure patriotic feeling.

In that great up-heaving and purifying convulsion, our late civil war, at first men's more generous sentiments flamed up. They were ready to give almost everything for their country, without a thought of their own interest. They acted enthusiastically and heroically. But after a few months had passed by, how many were willing to come forward and give their money to the government? And what was the argument for taking the bonds, but this: "If the Government is not worth anything, what is any bank or any institution going to be worth in this country? Our interest, therefore, requires that we should maintain the Government." And how soon the idea of men's going into the army without money and without price died out! How soon pecuniary considerations came in!

But do you suppose that because a man took a large bounty, and received regular pay, in the army, he had no patriotism? He had some patriotism. But he acted from mixed motives. A man may act from strong selfish motives, from strong avaricious motives, and yet there may be mingled with these higher motives. And it is just this that deceives men. Because they see that their self-interest runs in the direction of religion or patriotism, they gild it over, and say, "All the force which is inspired by the lower basilar feelings takes on the form of religious feelings;" and they give credit for all that force to the religious feelings. Men think, for instance, that their zeal in religion is purely a matter of conscience, not stopping to consider how much that zeal depends on their standing in the church, on their social position, on the influences that surround them, and how far it is their interest to be zealous concerning particular truths of religion.

This question, then, comes up, where there are mixed motives: Does the presence of the lower vitiate or destroy the higher? No. It adulterates it, but it does not destroy it. Where a man acts for a right thing from a pure motive; where a man sees the truth, and follows it conscientiously, from love to God, from love to man, and from love to the truth itself, that is the highest form of conduct. But if afterwards there is the consciousness in his bosom that while he acts from these higher motives interest comes in, this lower motive does not vitiate the others. It is his duty to see that the lower motive is kept in its proper

place, but the higher motives are not destroyed by the existence of the lower one.

Sometimes when persons examine themselves, they say, "I fear I am not truly a Christian, because I find that I am acting from such and such lower motives, as well as from higher ones." Well, there are very few people who act from less than five or six different motives. Almost all our actions spring from complex motives. Our faculties are complex, and it is reasonable to suppose that our motives will be complex. But when the motives are in the main of the highest order, if a lower motive comes in, though you may not be on the highest plane, yet you may be within the bounds of righteousness. When, however, the lower motive is the strongest, and religion is merely an embellishment of that; when the animating motive—that which gives life and power—is self-interest, and conscience is used as a varnish or cloak, then it becomes detestable, pernicious. It is what we call "hypocrisy." It is acting from one motive under the pretense that the action proceeds from another motive. A man is not necessarily a hypocrite who acts from different classes of motives; but he who acts from a lower class of motives under the pretense that he is acting from a higher class, is hypocritical.

Now, I will not deny that Demetrius had some patriotism, and some sentiment of devotion. I think it very likely that he had. But it is very evident that his feeling of self-interest was stronger than either of these. He was not a good man; and yet he was not an extremely bad man. He was just like men that you see every day. There are many men who do business with no better motives than those which actuated him. A man does a kindness; and you find, when you get at his motive, that it was a selfish one. "Why did you do that kindness?" you may say to him. "To tell you the truth," he says, "I want accommodation; and this man is cousin to one of the principal directors of that corporation, and I knew it would help him; and I knew that when I asked for accommodation it would be in his power to help me. You never lose anything by being kind. I tell my friends that they ought to be kind." That is not thought to be very bad; and it is just precisely the same that Demetrius did, acting from one motive in connection with other stronger ones, and keeping the best looking one ahead for show, and the other ones out of sight for work! And so we find it all through society, and all through life. There is nothing more common than for men to hang one motive outside where it can be seen, and keep the others in the background to turn the machinery.

From this narrative we may derive the principle or statement that moral truth is of transcendently more value in every community than

all the material interests of society. It is of more value than the order and peace of society itself. There is an impression that the Gospel is such a soothing syrup, such a tranquilizing system, that if a preacher knows his business, men going to hear him will be made very peaceable and happy, and will go away feeling very good. If, on the other hand, a man disturbs the community, and when he preaches men are violently excited, and there are disputations, and parties are formed, it is thought that these results are *prima facie* evidence that he is not a true preacher of the Gospel. And it has passed into a byword—we see it in all the fifth-rate newspapers, and hear it from the lips of pot-house politicians (those men whose wisdom rises no higher than the passions)—that ministers ought to be “followers of the meek and lowly Jesus,” and that they “go beyond their sphere” when they preach so as to disturb anybody.

But did you notice what I read in the opening service from our Savior's lips?

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.” I have come to teach men the truth, and to form a conscience for the truth. I have come to make men feel that it is more important that they should follow the convictions of moral sense, than that they should follow their interests or their friendships. Every man must stand up in his place and say, “This is the truth, and I will abide by it.” And then men will be disturbed by his example. Therefore he must be their foe. Then there will be division and quarreling. And yet, he must stand firm to the truth.

If you go home, saying, “I must follow the Lord,” and everybody in the household says, “We are following Mammon;” or, “We are following the Goddess of Pleasure,” it is for you to stand by your higher light. And you will give offence. You will be an element of discord. Nevertheless, you must be firm, though your doing so leads to disruption. If the father and mother will worship Baal, and the child would worship Jehovah, the child must not yield. And if there be quarreling, it is not the child's fault.

If men in a community see that good morals are being dissolved, and that the tone of conscience is being lowered, and they preach a truth that is calculated to raise the tone of conscience, and make it more imperious than it was, so that it shall rebuke those who are supplying food for men's passions and lusts, and so that it shall come in conflict with ignorance and superstition, I take the side of the disturber. I am bound to preach the truth so that every man shall see

the right better, and so that the whole of society shall live on a higher plane. I am bound to preach so as to bring about the reorganization of society—peaceably if I can; but if men will not let it be done peaceably, it is their lookout, and not mine. I am bound to preach so as to inspire men with the conception that they who live for the present only, live as animals live. I am bound to preach so that men shall avoid grog-shops and pawnbrokers' offices. But the grog-shop keeper and the pawnbroker do not like it; and they say, "My business will be ruined if this preaching is not stopped."

That which you recognize as being true in its lower applications, is just as true in its higher applications. And that which our Master did, and which the old apostles did, has been done by every one that is worthy to be called an apostle since the days of Christ.

There has been a great dispute as to whether there are any legitimate descendants of the apostles. I think there are. They are supposed to come by the imposition of hands. *I* believe they come by the imposition of hands. It is supposed that the hand is placed on the head of the candidate. No, it is placed a little lower down—upon the heart. And it is the hand of the Holy Ghost. That is a lineal descendant of the apostles who has a clearer and higher understanding of the truth than those about him, and who so preaches it that it disturbs the consciences, the peace and the settled order, of those about him, and disturbs them just so far as is necessary to the work of reformation. If men say that in Rome there are descendants of Peter or Paul, let them show that they are purer and more disinterested than other men; that they go out to reform the world just as those apostles did; that they break up wrong; that they build up right; that they bring light where there is darkness. If they prove their apostolicity in this manner, I shall not have a word to say. I think him to be a descendant of the apostles who preaches as the apostles did, and as the Master did, that which benefits men's souls. I have no objection to bishops. I should like to see a hundred more than there are. I do not envy them their robes, nor their dioceses, nor their honors. But if they say that they are apostolic in any other sense than that in which any other good man is apostolic, I should like to see what they do. If they are imitating the example of the apostles in the community, and do not care for honor nor for ease; if they are probing wickedness in the community; if they are making sacrifices for the cause of God; if they are revolutionizers by the power of Christ's truth, then I say, Yes, they are not only bishops, but *apostolic* bishops. They are called of God by the unction of the Holy Ghost. The evidence of it is, that they are doing the work of the apostles. He that does the apostles' work is of the apostles. He is of the same *lineage*, if you please to call it so.

That is the only apostolic descent that I believe in, and the only one that I think will be believed in long. He that holds the same Gospel as the apostles did, and preaches it in the same way and in the same spirit, is an apostolic preacher, ordained or unordained.

This work is going on in our time. Do not think, because it has gone on through one phase triumphantly, that the end has come. Do not suppose, because we have fought a great battle for liberty, that the conflict is over. Do not think that the time for agitation is passed, and that now we are going to have a blessed peace. You are not perfect yet. Society is not perfect. And industry is far from being perfect. It is badly, corruptly, unjustly organized. Social life is not pure. There are ten thousand questions which are so crooked that they belong to the prophecy that *crooked places must be made straight*. There are places that are depressed, and must be exalted. There are great wrongs that tower up like mountains, which must come down. The preaching of the Gospel is to be doctrinal; but all doctrinal preaching is to come down and touch our life.

This nation will be agitated on a great many questions. All nations are being agitated on these same questions. The truth of God has not done its full work anywhere. The power of God in Jesus Christ, the power of the divine principle of love, to make the individual character beautiful, is not expended. We are to live on a higher plane. We are to think more nobly and truly. We are to feel more divinely and heroically. We are to live lives that shall approximate more nearly to the divine model.

And as it is with the individual, so is it with society. There are to be expansions of social intercourse. There are to be purifications and refinements. They are to cross men's interests, and upset men's opinions. Civil society, in its own structure, is to undergo a revolution. But it is not to be so always. "The earth is the Lord's," and it is one day to be redeemed. That day is coming little by little in Europe. Little by little it is coming in Asia. It is yet to come in every country on the globe. The world is to be disenthralled and purified. The whole globe is to be, in its totality, higher than the most favored Christian community, or the most favored Christian family, or the most eminent Christian individual. And before that time comes, the truth must have *free course to run and be glorified*. It must be preached in fidelity and power.

My young friends, who are beginning life, beware of taking sides with current opinions. Opinions are not true simply because they are held to be true in your day. Whatever thing comes to you with the light of the Holy Ghost, inspiring meditation and research; whatever thing inspires you with a nobler life, and to a higher activity in that

life—that take. Range yourselves on the side of coming truth. Range yourselves on the side of clearer manifestations of God. Do not run after every novelty. Do not go hither and thither for change. But wherever you are continually drawn, your conscience and reason bearing witness that you are drawn in a direction in which you are less animal and selfish and proud, and in which you are nobler, truer, simpler, and sweeter-minded, there go. Follow that call; for it is a divine call. Satan will never tempt you to go toward God. By no blandishment will he make you humbler and better. Whatever may have been your teaching or your theorizing, be true to the inspirations of the divine mind.

God is yet working in the world, and he is to bring to pass a glory of which at present we have but the feeblest conception. Be not afraid of agitations. Be not afraid of excitements. Only see that they are agitations and excitements, not of the lower passions, but of the moral sentiments. Be not afraid that you will not be orthodox. Be God's, and then you will be orthodox. Whatever the churches may say, "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Then, whether you measure more or less than the creeds call for, you will be sure to be on the right ground.

I call you to a larger Christian life; to a nobler Christian faith; and to one that shall augment to the end of your lives. I do not ask you to become a member of this sect, and wear our epaulets and our buttons and our stripes, and to go about boasting of our superiority over other sects. You are Christ's, I am Christ's, we are all Christ's, loved of Christians of every name, and loved of churches however imperfect; and if your lot be cast with others, work with them, and help them. Hinder none. Revile none. Quarrel with none. Take sides with the highest truth, with the highest morality, and with the most earnest justice and benevolence and purity. Take sides with God, and God will take care of you. And rising, at last, from this dismal morass, which we call life, you shall be admitted where there shall be no more discord, into the blessedness of the heavenly land. For those who are in the minority for Christ's sake on earth, shall, by the power of Christ, be in everlasting majority in the kingdom of heaven.

## PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU, O God, art in heaven; and yet everywhere thou art present. Thou dwellest in the land of spirits, and we are incased in the body; and yet, thou dost vouchsafe thy help and thy care—the more because we are needy; for thou art gracious, slow to anger, and plentiful in mercy. Thou rejoicest in good, and not in evil. Thou hast sanctified pain; and to those that are instructed thou hast redeemed suffering from being an ill. Thou dost grant unto us thy Son, our Savior, who was made a perfect Captain of our salvation by the things which he suffered. Thou hast called us to suffering, if we would follow him; and thou hast sanctified it, so that it no longer is poisonous, no longer quenches joy, but is only the darkness preceding the light, and the medicine that brings health. We thank thee that by pain and suffering the heart is deepened. We thank thee that thou dost open its chambers, and fill them full of power and life. We thank thee that the way of suffering is the way of victory and exaltation and joys supreme, which by and by none shall take, and no suffering shall quench. We pray, therefore, that we may be willing to follow thee in the way of trouble, that we may bear our burdens cheerfully; that we may accept such cares as are brought upon us as the will of the Lord, and count ourselves thy pupils in the school where thou art disciplining us, and teaching us to be stronger, more manly, purer, more true, and more victorious in our conflicts. We pray that we may feel that we are evermore under thy watchful care, and that thou art giving nothing too much, and taking away nothing too much; that all things work together for good to them that love thee. Give us this solvent of all human trouble—thy love. May we have such steadfastness of adhesion to thee, may we so make ourselves thy followers, and thee our chief to whom we owe fealty and obedience, that every thing in life shall take its color from thee. And may we live as Christ's men. Living or dying, may we be the Lord's. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant unto us, being exercised therein, wisdom to discern what is good, and what is right; what things are just, and what things are true. And in the perplexities of our conscience, in all our doubts and diffidence, grant, we pray thee, thine own Spirit, that ours may be quickened, and lifted so high that they shall look down upon these earthly questions, and solve them easily, out of a pure heart; out of a heart made lucid by communion with the Spirit of God. May we be able to sit in judgment on all human things. And grant, we beseech of thee, that we may have power to make the truth known to others—sweetly and blessedly to those that accept it, and, if it must needs be, with threat, yea and with a rod of iron, to those that are contumacious. Grant that thy truth may have free course to run and be glorified in all the world. We thank thee that the days draw near, and that the blessed work begun in thy time, and following through thine apostles, still speeds on. And though it passes in and out, as mighty battles, with various evolutions, so, though thou art at times hiding thy people in their conflict. Though they seem borne back and defeated, thou art pressing evermore, and continually, the enemy, and thou shalt give full and final victory to thy cause. The earth shall be saved. The race shall be regenerated—not merely the few that are scooped out by the Church; for the day shall come when thou wilt have the whole earth, and all its generations, at thy feet. Men shall be born to know the Lord, and shall grow up in holiness; and the law of purity and of wisdom and of rectitude shall govern men and nations. We rejoice to believe it; and though we shall not see it here, we work for it, and in the faith of it. And we believe that we shall see it from the heavenly land, working there still as here, in sympathy with thee, and rejoicing there as here in all that is good and noble.

And now, Lord, we pray that thou wilt teach us to be more wise in the administration of truth. Teach us how, here, at home and everywhere, to prove ourselves Christ's men in everything. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt prepare us for the events that are preparing for us. We ask not to know anything of to-morrow. Only give us thyself, and there can nothing befall us that shall not be good. Grant us thine own presence. Comfort us in solitude. Cheer us in despondency. And grant relief to all that are in affliction, and that shall walk in affliction and bereavement. Lift the light of thy countenance upon any that are drooping. Grant, we pray thee, that Christ may be all things to us, and to all of us; and in all emergencies. In every station of life, may we

have this open door, and this waiting Lord and this ruling heart, and this omnipotent hand, to which we shall fly. Grant that thus living we may rejoice in thy work, and sing psalms of praise. And when we come to die, may it be with triumph; and may we rise to immortality. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

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### PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless us in the word spoken. Grant that the truth as it is in Christ may become dear, unspeakably precious, to us. May we learn how to hear thy voice rather than men's. May we, by a sensitive conscience, grown more and more critically discerning by use, by culture in thy word, by prayer, and by fidelity to all our convictions, come to that power of conscience, and to that discernment, which shall interpret the way of God and the voice of God to us. Oh! that we might live for the whole world. Oh! that we might join ourselves to all men. Oh! that we might lift ourselves, blessed Savior, to thy side, and look down upon the world as thou didst when thou didst suffer for thine enemies, and all of them, and didst pour out thy blood to redeem the whole earth. Oh! where are our hatreds? How ashamed should we be of all our baser feelings! May we belong to thee, and to all thine, and to everything that is good, and just, and pure, and of good report.

And now, we pray that thou wilt bless us, pastor and people, in the temporary separation that is to follow. Grant, we pray thee, that our lives and our health may be precious in thy sight. But yet, do with us what seemeth good. To slay or to give life is equal mercy if it is thy will. If we are spared, may we come together again in due season, to take up the armor which we lay down; to resume the labor which we have sustained. And may this Church live, so long as it bears a pure testimony, and is a clear shining light—and we pray that that may be through many generations. We pray that this Church may be a continuous fountain of large, true, catholic, Christian faith. Spread abroad, we pray thee, the truest gospel everywhere; and fill the earth with thy glory. And to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*



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